

Bachelor's Thesis

Degree programme in Business Administration

International Business

2011

Petteri Hirvonsalo

Developing a Youth Organization

– Case Turku YMCA



TURUN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Petteri Hirvonsalo

Developing a Youth Organization

– Case Turku YMCA

Small sports organizations in Finland find it increasingly difficult to recruit new players. There are many alternatives for the children to choose from and the addition of the internet and social media have limited to amount of free time that they have. It has become increasingly important for sports organizations to be more careful in identifying their potential consumers and recruiting methods. This thesis covers one such organization, the Turku YMCA. The sport in question, basketball, has a strong place in the Finnish sports scene. Like many of the sports in Finland, basketball has a loyal following, but it has not been able to challenge the more popular sports. Basketball organizations have focused more on creating temporary interest, and neglecting to create their own identity, values and put an emphasis on loyalty. The main objective of this thesis is to find different methods for the typical Finnish sports organization to develop without having to spend extra resources.

Turku YMCA is one of those typical sports organizations. This thesis presents an overview of the organization and the tasks and responsibilities of the personnel. It identifies the actions that can be done to improve personnel satisfaction at Turku YMCA. Based on the findings this thesis looks at ways for the organization to recruit new players and coaches to the organization. Lahti YMCA was selected as a benchmark case for this thesis, because Lahti YMCA has the most homegrown players in the Finnish League. The thesis presents recommendations to Turku YMCA, which will focus on developing personnel satisfaction, loyalty, and player retention.

This thesis was done in cooperation with Turku YMCA.

KEYWORDS:

Basketball, youth organization, service marketing, loyalty marketing, recruitment, word of mouth,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	2
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 External and Internal Marketing	9
2.2 Sports specific marketing	10
2.2.1 The Consumer	11
2.2.2 The Competitor	11
2.2.3 The Company	12
2.2.4 The Climate	12
2.3 Segmentation	12
2.4 Customer loyalty and word of mouth marketing	13
3 MARKETING AND SERVICES MARKETING THEORY	17
3.1 Four dimensions of services marketing	17
3.1.1 Intangibility	17
3.1.2 Heterogeneity	17
3.1.3 Inseparability	18
3.1.4 Perishability	18
3.2 Servuction model	18
3.3 Conceptual Model of Service quality	20
3.4 The Service-Profit Chain	23
4 METHODOLOGY	25
4.1 Methods of research	25
4.2 Quantitative data	25
4.3 Qualitative data	25
4.4 Mixed methods approach	26
4.5 Surveys and interviews	26
5 FINDINGS	28
5.1 Turku YMCA	28
5.2 Lahti YMCA	34
5.3 Players	40
6 RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS	44
REFERENCES	49
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TURKU YMCA PERSONNEL	51

1 Introduction

I have been a basketball coach at the Turku YMCA for the past three years. During that time I have seen how difficult it is to run the daily operations of a small sports organization. These small sports organizations suffer from the fact that there are too few employees and too many tasks. This is a reality, because the foundation of most sports organizations in Finland is based on volunteer work. The goal of this thesis is to provide helpful information and recommendations to Turku YMCA on how to overcome the typical challenges that small sports organizations have.

The time that I spend with the organization and its personnel provides me with important knowledge and the right approach for this thesis. The fact that I have a connection with the organization made me passionate about the subject. The chance to cooperate with the organization gives me extra motivation, because I will be able to help put my recommendations into practice.

Since this thesis focuses on small sports organizations, the objective is to find ways to develop Turku YMCA with the existing resources, because money does not guarantee a well functioning organization. Turku YMCA's most important currency is the satisfaction of their personnel, because they are the ones who the players come in contact with almost on a daily basis. The objective of this thesis is to identify actions that can be done to improve the satisfaction of the Turku YMCA personnel.

For small sports organizations player and personnel recruitment are extremely important factors. The reality is that small sports organizations do not recruit based on volume, but rather by choosing the right venues and the right message. This thesis focuses on analyzing what makes attracting players and coaches so challenging, and what is the organizations current recruitment process like and how successful it is. Based on the findings, I will recommend different ways for the organization to develop their recruitment process.

This thesis is done in cooperation with the Turku YMCA

This thesis is based on the following research questions:

- How to improve the Turku YMCA youth organization with the existing resources?
- What actions can be done to improve personnel satisfaction?
- How to attract new people (coaches, players)?

This thesis is constructed according to the following structure:

The first section contains the introduction to the thesis, the research questions and the reasons why the author decided to undertake this subject. It will also include a brief introduction of the organization in questions – Turku YMCA. This chapter will provide the reader with a brief overview of the organization's personnel and their tasks and responsibilities, and also provide important data about the organizations present and past.

Section 2 covers the marketing, sport marketing and loyalty theories that are relevant to the context of the thesis. This literature was selected to give the reader an overview of what kind of issues are needed to be considered when analyzing a sports organization. This chapter will concentrate on external and internal marketing, sports specific marketing, customer loyalty, and word of mouth.

Section 3 covers the theoretical framework by briefly explaining the Servuction model, the Conceptual model for service quality, and the Service-Profit Chain. The objective is to find out why these particular theories are essential and valuable parts to this thesis, and how they can assist the Turku YMCA organization in improving the quality of the service they are offering to players.

Section four demonstrates the research methods used in this thesis. The chapter briefly defines both qualitative and quantitative approaches and their advantages and disadvantages, and describes the reasons why the research in this thesis was done by using mixed methods. It will also present the way the interviews were conducted with the Turku YMCA personnel and players and Lahti YMCA.

The fifth section covers the current state of the organization. This chapter includes the findings from benchmarking one of top Finnish organizations in youth coaching Lahti YMCA to Turku YMCA. This chapter presents the findings from the qualitative

interviews done with the personnel of Turku YMCA and results from the survey that the players of Turku YMCA answered to.

The last section draws a conclusion using the findings gathered for this thesis. This chapter presents recommendations to Turku YMCA on how to improve their youth organization. The recommendations are aligned with the research questions. The conclusions part analyzes if this thesis has met its objectives and provided an answer for all the research questions.

1.2 Organization Overview: Turku YMCA

Turku YMCA is a voluntary association that has several different activities. Cub scouts, youth activity, music (choirs), basketball and other sports like scuba diving and orienteering, and they also offer social activities. The basketball organization is one separate entity inside the YMCA and it makes independent decisions. The basketball organization has two full-time employees: executive director Kalevi Tuominen and head of coaching Pekka Lähde. The chairman of the executive board is Pentti Hilke.

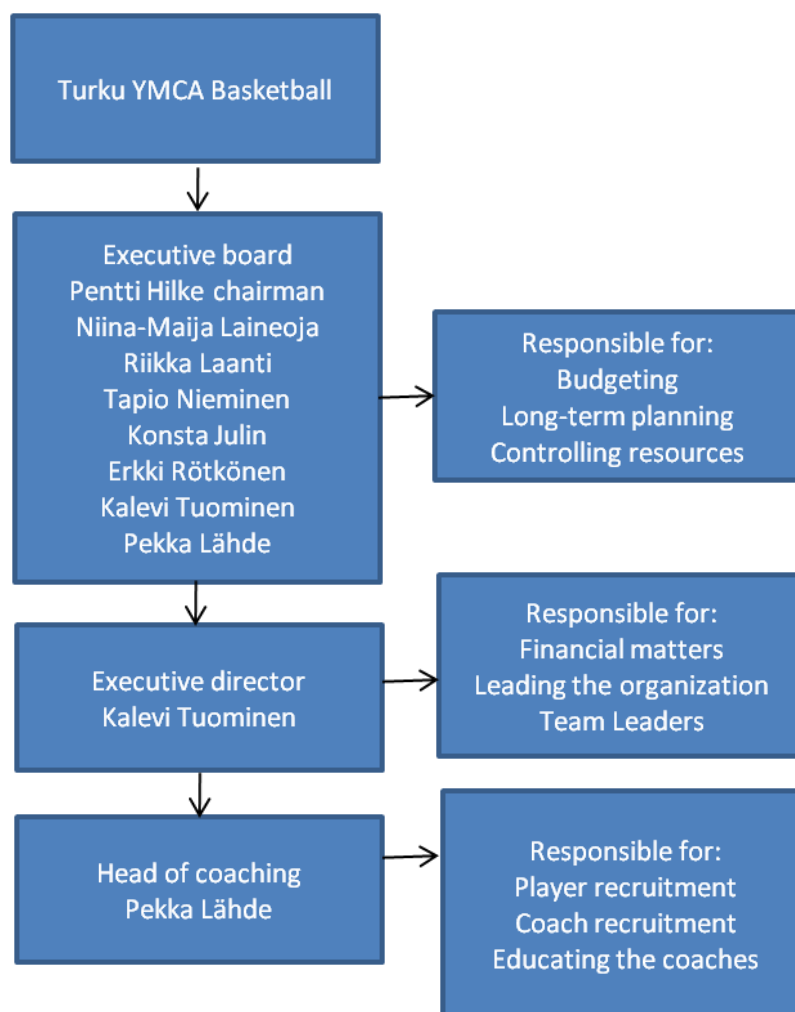


Figure 1. Turku YMCA Organizational chart. (Tuominen, 2010)

The main decision making branch in the organization is the executive board. The executive board controls the resources, but does not make operative decisions. The members of the executive board are Pentti Hilke, Niina-Maija Laineoja, Riikka Laanti, Tapio Nieminen, Konsta Julin, Erkki Rötönen, Pekka Lähde and Kalevi Tuominen. The executive board meets once a month. (Tuominen 2010).

The executive director Kalevi Tuominen is in charge of all the financial matters. Tuominen represents the organization in the Finnish Basketball Association and also deals with the city of Turku. He organizes and oversees the sponsorship deals that Turku YMCA is involved in and deals with the Sports and Outdoor Activities department for the city of Turku on all matters that relate to the organization. Tuominen is also responsible for selecting a team leader for every youth team.

The head of coaching Pekka Lähde is responsible for helping the coaches and signing them to contracts, and recruiting players and coaches. He is in charge and organizes the extra practices for the organizations Talent-group (5-7 of the most talented players in every age group excluding the A-juniors and U10-team). Lähde also attends the afternoon club session for first graders. This past season (2010-2011) he also coached the organizations B-junior team.

Turku YMCA has six junior age groups for their players: The A- (for players born in 1992 to 1994), B- (1995-96) and C- (1997-98) juniors, the U12-team (1999-2000), and the U10-team (2001-02). The organization has 110 junior players. They have a senior team that plays in the regional second division. The Turku YMCA youth teams have been very successful during recent years. The younger teams (U12 and U10) played in the western regional first division. After the regular season, the top four teams play a Final Four tournament. U12 won gold and the U10 silver. The upper junior teams (C, B, A) all played in the Finnish League. The C-juniors were fifth in the Finnish League and got silver from the regional first division. The B-juniors were sixth and the A-juniors eighth.

During the 2010-11 season Turku YMCA had 17 coaches in charge of their youth teams and one coach at the helm of the senior team. The coaching staff is presented in Figure 2. The allocation in every age group differs, because, for example, the C-juniors had three teams playing in regional divisions. The level of participation differs between the coaches, some are involved in every practice and some are only committed to one practice per week.

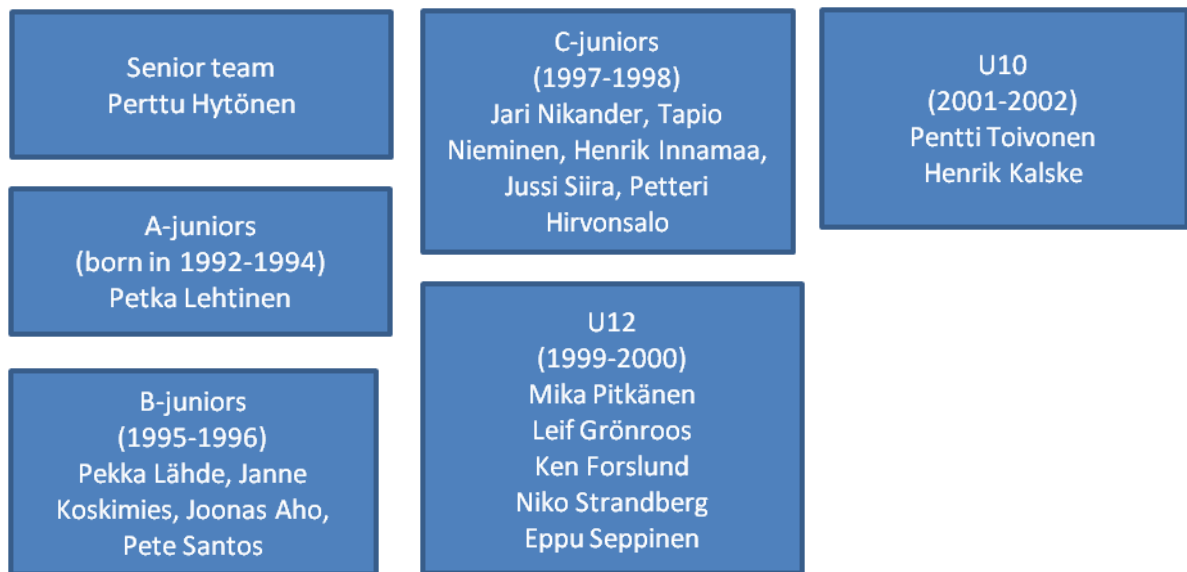


Figure 2. Turku YMCA coaching staff. (Tuominen 2010)

The organizations main recruitment tool is the Vesseli program. It is meant for boys and girls who are in preschool. The objective is to get the children familiarized with basketball and make the transition of joining the organization easier. The Vesseli program is run by Leif Grönroos and is held at Wäinö Aaltonen School in Hirvensalo. According to Pekka Lähde, Turku YMCA has applied for additional funding for the 2011-12 season from the ministry of education to expand Vesseli to four schools and to hire more personnel to support the expansion. The organization also organizes afternoon clubs for first grades. Turku YMCA has a basketball camp in cooperation with Turun Sanomat, the local newspaper.

The organizations main source of funding is the annual membership fee paid by the junior players. The money is used to pay the license and insurance expenses of the coaches and the players. Another source of revenue for the organization is the Junior Basket Tournament that is organized in cooperation with Turun Riento and NaKo from Naantali. Over 100 teams participate in this tournament.

Turku YMCA cooperates with Turun Riento, a basketball organization which focuses solely on women's basketball. The two organizations have combined their forces in coaching the talented players and next season they will try to expand the Vesseli program to include four schools in the Turku area, two run by Turku YMCA and two by Riento. Turku YMCA's main competitor is Ura Basket from Kaarina (located about 10

kilometers from Turku). Ura Basket's senior team plays in the first division, which is a significant marketing and recruitment advantage compared to the Turku YMCA. The two organizations have virtually no cooperation between them. (Lähde 2010)

Turku YMCA have won gold in the Finnish league four times (1973, 1975, 1977, and 1982), silver two times (1976, 1979) and bronze (1974, 1983, and 1999). The organization has also won the Finnish Cup four times (1972, 1976, 1982, and 1999). (Tuominen 2010) The Turku YMCA senior team now plays in the regional second division. Since the decision to drop out of the first division the organization has redirected their monetary resources more towards the youth teams. The difficulties in building a communality or clear identity are also caused by the poor condition of the Turku area sporting venues. The senior team currently plays their home games at the Nunnavuori Sporting Facility. It will be renovated and fixed (starting in the fall of 2011) for the next one and half years due to mold problems. The next sporting facility which has the a proper size court for adult basketball is located in the Peltola Vocational Institute, which will also be closed for renovation after Nunnavuori is fixed. The city of is currently searching for a place the build a big indoor sports arena, but the location of it has yet to be approved. There are estimations that the new arena would be in use before the end of the year 2013. (Tuominen 2010)

2 Literature review

2.1 External and Internal Marketing

Kotler (2001, 5) defines marketing as "as social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others". It is very important for an organization to have good marketing ability when they are trying to promote their product or service. The main objective is to find out what the consumers want, need and if there is a demand for the company's product or service. (Kotler and co 2009, 4)

Marketing focuses on the customer and fulfilling their needs. For marketing to be successful all the organizational functions need to be tailored to meet the individuals' expectations. Understanding and identifying the needs of the customer is the main objective of marketing. The marketing process should lead to a customer who is ready to purchase, if the background analysis is done correctly. (Kotler and co 2009, 6-8)

After finding out the consumer needs, the demanding task is to find if the organization is capable of producing, manufacturing, distributing and offering a product or service that meets the customers' expectations. Before making marketing decisions the organization needs to consider how their intended message will be understood by the public. It is critical to incorporate the organizations values and objectives into every marketing decision. Analyzing how the marketing functions will affect the company's image will make it more likely that the marketing decision will be successful. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 80-82) Selling and advertising are only a small part of the marketing process and they are rather at the end of the marketing process than in the first stages. The majority of the marketing process takes place before the consumer has even seen or heard about the product or service, meaning that over 80 or 90 per cent of marketing happens while the consumer is not aware of the marketed object. (Kotler and co 2009, 7)

For internal marketing to be successful the organization must focus heavily on employee quality and performance. They have to educate and motivate their employees who are in constant contact with the customers. For an organization to deliver constantly high service quality, customer orientation must be a key focus for

personnel. If the organization wants to create the standards for proper customer service, they should place internal marketing before external marketing in order of importance. When the organization is marketing a product or service, they must first make sure that their employees are capable and willing to provide it. (Armstrong et al. 2001, 547)

The main objective of internal marketing is that all the vital information that needs to be communicated to the people involved is delivered to them in a fast and effective manner. The intended message needs to be in the correct form so that it will get the wanted result. (Hargie and Tourish 2004, 32-35) It is vital for the success of internal marketing that there are principles and guidelines that have been agreed upon together within the organization. Information and messages have to be sent in an organized fashion, and the organization has to select a proper channel for which the message is best received by the consumers. (Hargie and Tourish 2004, 85-95)

Marketing is an important tool for basketball organizations, because through marketing the organizations are able to create awareness about what they do and offer. The marketing of basketball organizations in Finland is usually not targeted to the masses and therefore not visible on the streets. The marketing these organizations do is focused more directly on the target group, instead of trying to appeal to the masses.

2.2 Sports specific marketing

Sport marketing is a vital part of organizational improvement and development. Sport marketing is not only about selling more tickets and placing advertisements in the paper. The practice and activities of sport marketing are based on the basic marketing activities, but are modified and adapted to one sport business in one industry. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 79-82) Sport marketing is not only involved in selling tickets to sporting events, but it is also involved with sports management, and the sport industry. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 82-83)

People who work in the sport business must be aware of several factors. The knowledge that the employees possess, has a direct and indirect influence on all the strategic decisions made by the organization. The issues the employees have to be aware of include the consumer, the competitor, the company, and the climate. The four C's framework describes the factors that affect the decisions sport marketing organizations have to make.

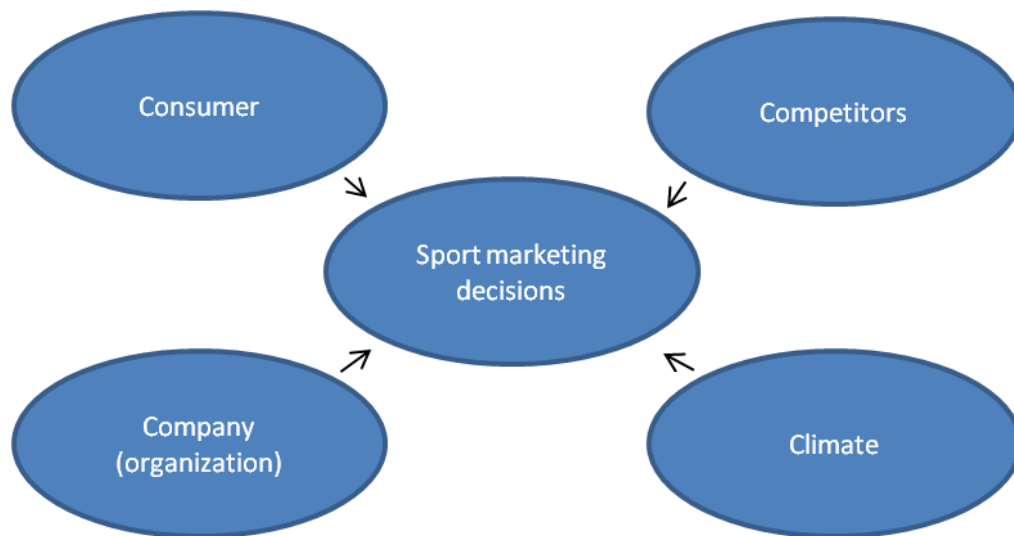


Figure 3. The Four C's affecting sport marketing strategies (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 89)

2.2.1 The Consumer

When an organization is making sport marketing decisions, they need to analyze their consumers to know why they need and want the company's product/service. This information is used to make future strategic decisions. It is important for the organization to identify their potential consumers. For example, when a basketball organization is choosing the best way to recruit players, they have to identify the age group that the potential players are in and then market their services towards them. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 89)

2.2.2 The Competitor

It is important that the organization analyzes their competitors constantly, because it helps them to realize and gather information about the industry's recent trends. Current trends can affect your organization; because, for example children can easily choose another sport because it is in more demand. The organization needs to constantly analyze what their main competitors are doing and compare to their own organization. Organizations need to understand that whatever their competitors do, it has an effect on them, depending on how large their industry is. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 90)

2.2.3 The Company

The companies also need to analyze themselves to find out their strengths and weaknesses. When planning future sport marketing decisions, the organization has to be sure that they are ready and able to deliver the product or service that they have promised to the consumer. Organizations need to have realistic view of where they stand against their main competitors, and improve themselves through constant communication and feedback inside the organization. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 90)

2.2.4 The Climate

It is important for the organization to analyze and understand the climate in which they are operating, because societal changes can have an effect on the popularity of their industry. Every action has counteraction, so the organization needs to be careful if their analysis identifies any climate changes with their external communication, because the wrong message can cause someone to stop using their product or service. Economy is big part of this equation, because big changes in the economy always have an effect on every organization. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 91-93)

2.3 Segmentation

Segmenting, targeting and positioning enable the organization to develop strategies appropriate to different set of consumers. Through segmentation, the organization identifies and understands the common characteristics of the consumers in that segment and can determine how to address their unique demands. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 94) According to Pitts and Stotlar (2002, 95): "Industry segmentation is used to better identify, define, and understand the common characteristics of those businesses within the industry segment and to help with competitor analysis and competitive advantage strategies". (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 95)

"A target market is a segment of consumers who are homogeneous and who have purchasing power and the willingness to buy" as Pitts and Stotlar (2002, 95) mention. Positioning is the way an organization uses its marketing mix to influence the consumer's perception of the product or service, for example, by altering the way the consumer feels about the quality of the product/service. (Pitts and Stotlar 2002, 95)

Basketball organizations can use segmentation to their advantage by making different recruiting processes for different target groups. For example, if a basketball

organization is trying to recruit preschoolers to choose basketball as their first hobby, the recruitment message has to be specifically for them. Preschoolers should learn basketball through simple games that teaches them the basic skills of basketball. The tone for school visits to Elementary schools needs to be a bit different because the time frame is shorter. It is important that the children identify with the presenters, get the children involved immediately and get them excited about the game.

2.4 Customer loyalty and word of mouth marketing

“A customer’s decision to be loyal or to defect is the sum of many small experiences with the organization” as Kotler and co (2009, 389-390) mention. Loyalty is an important part of creating a well-functioning organization. It is built over time by offering the personnel what is promised, so that he/she does not even consider defecting. When analyzing the theory of loyalty, it is important to find out the reasons for change in personnel and how it can be reduced by communicating the right things at right moment. Loyalty is defined as a commitment by the consumer to re-buy or re-patronize a product or service in the future despite situational influences and marketing efforts. It has become more difficult to build and sustain customer loyalty through brand reputation, because most have markets have become extremely competitive. (Kotler etc 2009, 386-387)

According Robinson and Etherington (2006, 4-5): “Customer loyalty is an emotional and attitude-based preference resulting in the behavior of spontaneous personal recommendation and/or purchase”. Customer loyalty differs from customer satisfaction, because satisfaction is rational and relies less on emotion. The key component in creating customer loyalty is the element of personal recommendation. (Robinson and Etherington 2006, 4-5) Customer loyalty affects customer profitability. In many industries customer acquisition costs are so high that only the second or the third year brings in positive cash flow. Also, a lasting customer relationship brings in steady income. There might also be possibilities for cost savings in providing services and customer relationship management for established customers. (Arantola 2003, 22)

“If the organization is able to create a valuable connection to its customers, it will help them to create long-term success with their marketing decisions. Forming a strong bond with its customer requires the organization to allocate a lot of their resources to support this activity” Kotler and co (2009, 389) mention. Customers are all individuals and have specific expectations about their interactions with an organization, and by

meeting those expectations; the organization can satisfy the customer. (Robinson and Etherington 2006, 4-7) The consumer's satisfaction is dependent on how well the offeror performs during the decision-making phase. When the meeting goes according to the consumers expectation he/she is satisfied, if, however, it goes below expectation the consumer is dissatisfied. When the performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted. If the organization wishes to exceed to customers expectations, they need to have prior knowledge of what the customers expect. (Robinson and Etherington 2006, 4-7) In industries where consumers have more bargaining power, customer satisfaction means more. When customers have a lot of choices and information about their alternatives and low cost of switching the customer is always king. (Fornell 2007, 100) According to Farris (2007, 40): "Although sales or market share can indicate how well an organization is performing currently, satisfaction is perhaps the best indicator of how likely it is that the organization's customers will make further purchases in the future".

An important measuring metric related to satisfaction is willingness to recommend. When a customer is satisfied with a product, he or she might recommend it to friends, relatives and colleagues. This could be a powerful marketing advantage. Inside the organization, the collection and analysis of these data send a message about the importance of taking care of the customers and making sure that they have a positive experience with the organization's goods and services. (Farris 2007, 40-42)

Willingness to recommend is a key metric relating to customer satisfaction. The role of recommendation has increased in the decisions consumers make in recent years. Marketing and advertising surrounding the consumer has increased, and made it more difficult for the consumer to compare different products and rely on content of marketing. Because the consumers trust marketing less the role of recommendation has increased. It is easier for the consumer to trust his or her social network, friends or colleagues. Customers pay a lot of attention to recommendation because it is perceived to be the most relevant and complete form of communication. (Silverman 2001, 30)

Recommendation represents certain kind of marketing that is called word of mouth marketing. Word of mouth marketing can be defined in the following way: word mouth marketing is conversation between two people about a product from a neutral perspective, because the people are independent from the company offering the product or service. Word of mouth communication can be conversations or it can be

recommendation given by one person. “The most important thing in word of mouth marketing and recommendation is that people discussing about a product or a service have no personnel stake in getting the other person to buy the product” as mentioned by Silverman (2001, 21-28). By the independent credibility experience delivery is also a factor that makes word of mouth valuable. There are only two way to consumer can get the experience: directly or indirectly. It is the indirect experience, hearing about the product or service from a friend, that makes the decision for the consumer easier. (Silverman 2001, 28).

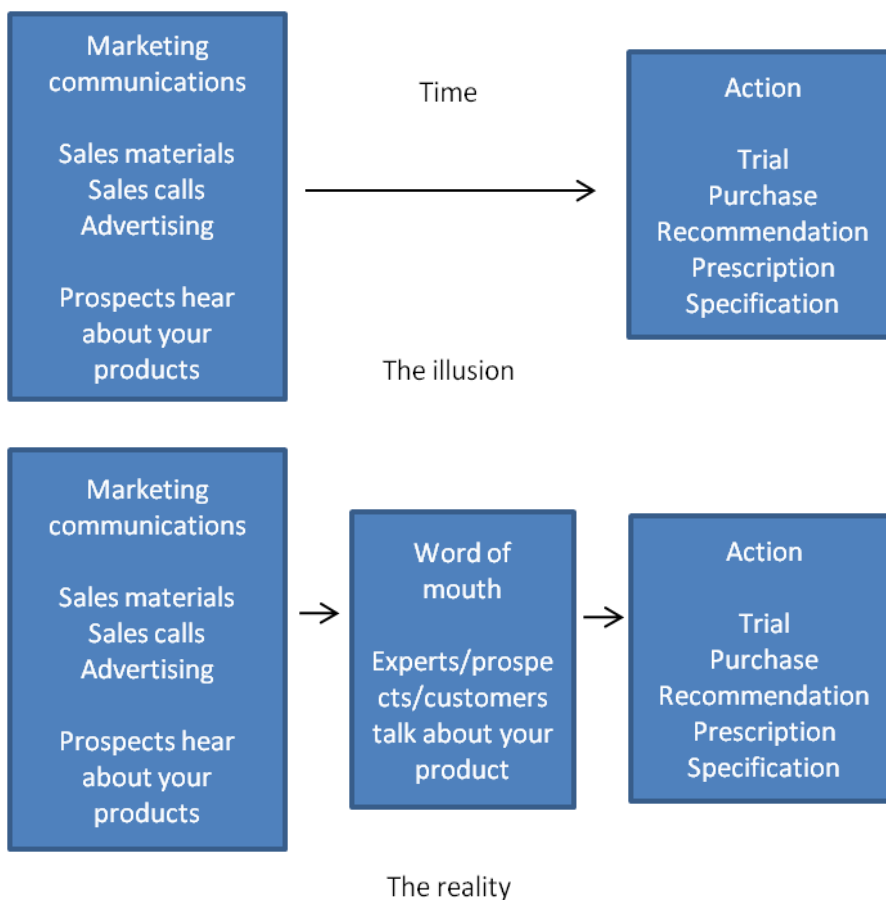


Figure 4. What causes sales – Illusion versus Reality. (Silverman, G. 2001, 36)

Figure 4 displays the common notion that many organizations have about their product or service. They believe that the advertising or the sales message causes the consumer to make the decision, when in reality many products succeed despite the marketing supporting it. The reason behind it is that, for example, when potential customers have gathered valuable data about a product or service from their peers or

an expert, they have formed they are able to trust their opinions and experiences more than the company's. (Silverman 2001, 36)

Basketball is a sport that relies heavily on word of mouth marketing. The everyday work the coaches do in practices is the best marketing tool for the organization. Positive and negative word of mouth can have an effect on the organization, because word of mouth is the most customer driven of all communication channels. (Silverman 2001, 30) If the junior players are satisfied with the level of coaching they will give positive feedback about the practices to their parents and recommend the organization to their friends. The players are also a valuable marketing tool. Instead of a lot of resources on placing ads on the internet or in newspapers, the word of mouth marketing that the players do is extremely valuable. This will also attract coaches into the organization, because they are looking for good working atmosphere where they can fulfill their coaching desires. If the foundation of the organization is good, it will relieve a lot pressure from the marketing goals. A well-functioning organization is the best marketing tool.

The organization can use word of mouth marketing by buzz and or viral marketing. Buzz marketing gives the organization a chance to provide their new product or service with awareness by selecting a few people from their target audience to spread the word. Viral marketing uses the power of peer-to-peer advertising, and, for example, can be used to create awareness about an upcoming basketball tournament. (Kotler etc 2009, 704)

3 Marketing and Services Marketing Theory

3.1 Four dimensions of services marketing

When defining a service, the difference between goods and services needs to be made perfectly clear. “Services are defined performances, deeds and efforts; whereas, goods are defined as objects, devices and things” as mentioned by Bateson and Hoffman (2007, 4-5). Organization need to be aware of the importance of the four dimensions of service marketing, because, for example, contact personnel (basketball coaches) are not inanimate objects, but actual persons who will not always give the same performance in every service encounter. If the contact person is feeling unhappy it will affect the customer (child or their parent) in a negative way. Highly motivated employees can create a more pleasant service experience for everyone who comes into contact with that person. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 38-39)

3.1.1 Intangibility

Intangibility means that the services cannot be seen, felt, tasted, or touched in the same manner as physical goods can be sensed (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 28). Intangibility makes the purchasing process riskier for the consumer. The level of risk can be determined if the service is high in search factors, experience factors or credence factors. A service that is high in search factors is one about which customers can get some prior information as to what they will receive. (Baron and Harris 2003, 19). It is a service that a customer needs to experience before deciding to purchase it. A service that is high in credence factors is one difficult to evaluate even after experiencing it, because there are often services that offered to the consumer by professional or experts. Services such as these are perceived to be very risky and require high degrees of reassurance from the service providers. (Baron and Harris 2003, 19-20).

3.1.2 Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity means that no organization can make a service operation achieve 100 per cent perfect quality all the time. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 41). No two services

offered to customers are exactly the same, whatever the attempts to standardize them. The quality of any service will vary when offered by different employees, probably at different times of the day. Customers who cannot distinguish between physical goods will normally be able to distinguish between services. (Baron and Harris 2003, 20) “Another challenge heterogeneity presents is that not only does that consistency of service vary from organization to organization and among personnel within a single organization, but it also varies when interacting with the same service provider on a daily basis” as Bateson and Hoffman (2007, 41) mention.

3.1.3 Inseparability

Inseparability means that in many service operations the production and consumption part cannot be separated, thus making the quality of service harder to measure and control. (Baron and Harris 2003, 20) Service providers are in constant contact with their customers and must construct their service operations with the customer’s physical presence in mind. The interaction between customer and service provider defines a critical incident, and represent the possibility for the organization to improve or to suffer setbacks in customer satisfactions and retention. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 32)

3.1.4 Perishability

Perishability refers to the fact that, unlike physical goods, services cannot be stored. To deal with problems related to perishability and uneven demand for services, the organizations need to be precise with production scheduling and demand forecasting. Organization can use pricing and promotion to get the customers to use their services at a time more convenient to them. (Baron and Harris 2003, 21)

3.2 Servuction model

Every service situation is unique and cannot be recreated, because service knowledge is intangible. Both products and services offer different benefits to the service user. For example, a parent of a youth basketball player may become satisfied with the fact the fact that they do not have to watch their child for the next two hours and another might be satisfied with the fact they themselves are learning about the game. Servuction model describes the factors that are related to the service experience. Service model contains the following four dimensions. The first three parts of the four dimensions for

the servuction model are visible to the customer in the service process. (Bateson and Hoffman. 2007, 8-11)

1. Service scape
2. Contact personnel/ service provider
3. Other customers
4. Organizations and systems

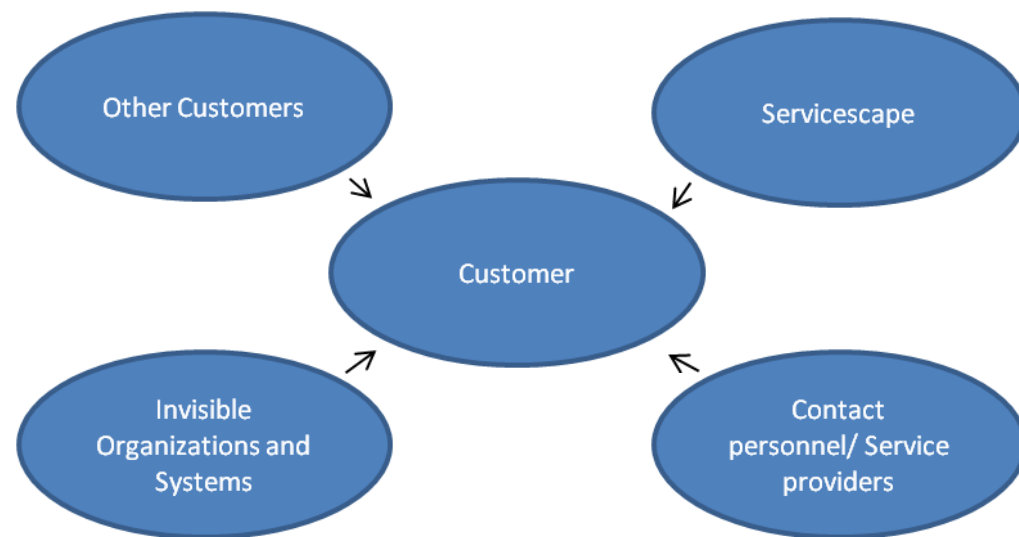


Figure 5. The Servuction Model. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 10)

Service scape contains all of the physical elements in the service process. For example, when a basketball player goes to practice the gym, it is described as a part of the service scape. Contact persons and service providers are the people you encounter during the service experience. Their effect on the service being successful is vital. The contact person and service are very important factors in service producing, because it helps to differentiate the service experience. For example, basketball organizations appear to be very similar when, for example, a parent with no prior experience with the sport is looking for information on how to enroll their child to a team. The difference between the organizations comes evident when they are exposed to the contact person (coach) and the level of their service.

Other customers have an effect on the service. They can be active or passive. If there is a difficult teammate in practice, he/she will have an effect on how the child feels about basketball after practice. A passive customer experience is for example, if a basketball player goes to practice and the court is divided into two and the other half is used by a floorball team. This happened because the organization failed to reserve the court on time and the teams had to make a compromise so that both teams could practice. With the divided space, there is less room to play and more waiting in line, and the service experience is less enjoyable. Behind the service experience there are organizations and systems that are invisible to the consumer. For example, when basketball players arrive at the practice facility they do not realize how effort went into reserving the gym. To reserve the gym there has to be communication between the organization that wants to use the facility, and the representative of the city who is in charge of the reservations. Because the facilities are usually owned by the city and used by several other sport teams, the facilities have to be reserved well in advance. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 8-11)

Sports organizations need to focus on the role of contact personnel/service provider part, because they are the ones who are in constant contact with the players, and thus play a very important role in the organization. Sport organizations need to realize that these persons are representing the organization and their values. It is important that these persons are qualified and motivated to their job, so that the service quality remains high and organization does not lose player because of unsatisfied personnel.

3.3 Conceptual Model of Service quality

Basketball organization is a service organization. The conceptual model of service quality is good framework to help think about different factors that are involved in the service process and how they affect the service receiver (the player) and the service provider (the organization).

The service quality process can be examined in terms of gaps between expectations and perceptions on the part of management, employees, and customers. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 334) The perception of quality tends to rely on repeated comparison of the customer's expectations about a particular service. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 334) If the received service fails to meet the customers' expectations several times, the customers will conclude the service to be of poor quality. Also, the consumer grades not just the outcome of the service, but also the service process. If one is, for example,

buying a washing machine, he/she will not just be satisfied if the washing machine to be a good choice, but if the person providing the service had good social skills in the service interaction, and the know-how of the product or service.

Conceptual model of service quality

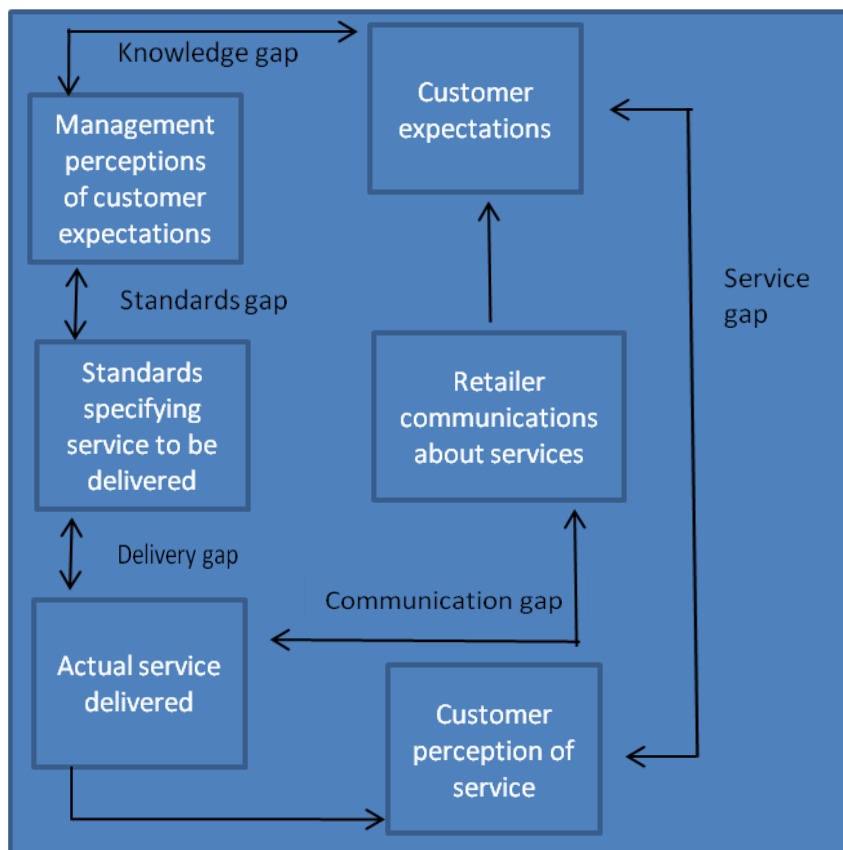


Figure 6. Conceptual Model of Service Quality. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 335)

The knowledge gap is usually between what customers want and what managers think customer want. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 336). If there is a wrong perception of what the customer want and need, the organization typically follows with wrong decisions. For example, a sport organization can rely too heavily on old assumptions that the people are there only to see a basketball, but nowadays they expected to be entertained when the game is on a break. To help avoid a problematic knowledge gap, organizations need to conduct consumer researchers to find out precise information about their customers. Acquiring more detailed information about their customer will help to decrease the probability that a knowledge gap problem occurs. (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 336).

The standards gap can open between management's perceptions of customer's expectations and the actual standards set for service delivery, such as order processing speed (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 336). When an organization is providing a service, it is vital for them to locate all points in the service process where they come in contact with the customer. Detailed standards can be written for the system should operate and the behavior of contact personnel at each point in the system (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 336). For example, if a basketball organization recruits new personnel there should always be the same kind of orientation. The standards gap can be a problem in organizations, which do not recognize it invests fully in delivering the best quality service, because they have focused more on other organizational matters.

The delivery gap occurs between the actual performance of a service and the standards set by management (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 338). This happens when an employee is unable to meet the service specification set by the organization, because they are not capable of doing what they are asked to do or they are a bad fit for the job. Unwillingness can be caused by lack of motivation, a bad working atmosphere or lack of ambition. Another common factor influencing the size of the delivery gap is role conflict (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 338). Role conflict occurs when there is a difference in the way that employees provide the service and the way that the organization wants them to provide it. Role conflict can occur in service situations, for example in a clothing store, where the employees' service routine can be altered by the customers, because they want the freedom to make their own decisions and not to be constantly offered clothing advice.

The communications gap is the difference between the service the firm promises it will deliver through its external communications and the service it actually delivers to its customers (Bateson and Hoffman 2007, 339). The organization needs to clearly decide what kind of message they want to send out, because if the message promises a different service than the one the customer actually gets, the communication gap increases. If a sports organization sends out advertisements about a basketball camp and promises that well-known basketball players will attend and does not, the customers will become dissatisfied and lose trust in the organization. There are two factors that have an effect on the communication gap. Organizations tend to overpromise, because their main objective is to acquire new customers.

Basketball organizations do not communicate their customer expectation through promises to customers, like commercial companies do, by for example offering 5 year guarantees on their products. Basketball organizations are not usually professional organizations, because their foundation is based on the work of volunteers. This means that they do not have the same kind of service standards that normal companies do. For this reason, management perception and customer perception are very close to each other. This puts very high pressure on the organizations management to both understand and manage the experience delivered to the end user.

3.4 The Service-Profit Chain

The previous three service marketing theories are simplified into a single chain-like model in The Service-Profit Chain. According to Heskett (2008, 120) “The Service Profit Chain establishes the relationship between profitability, customer loyalty, and employees satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity”. The links in the chain explain that if an organization has good internal service processes, it increases the number of satisfied employees. The more satisfied the employees, the better their retention rate and productivity. This affects the organizations ability to offer external service to its customers with better value. Better external service usually leads to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, which in turn leads to the end goal: profit and growth.

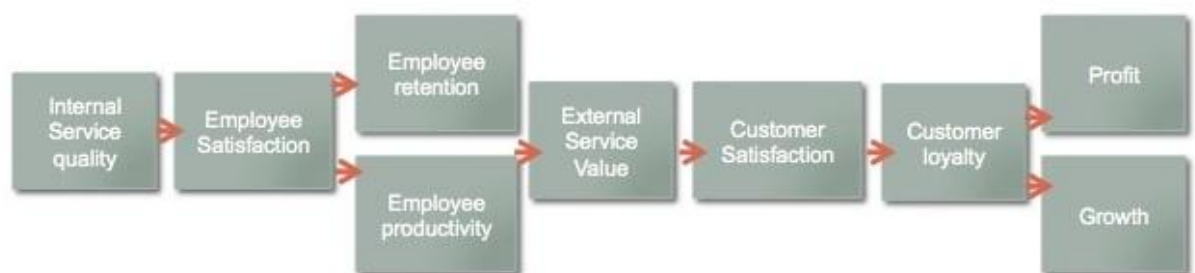


Figure 7. The Links in the Service-Profit Chain. Adapted from: (Heskett 2008, 120)

The implications for a sports organization from the Service-Profit Chain are that in order to improve player loyalty and satisfaction, the organization needs to focus on its internal processes with the same kind of mentality as any service organization would

approach the customer service process. Downfalls in player satisfaction and loyalty might be the result of a coach that is not satisfied from the level of service provided by his/her surrounding organizational infrastructure, although it might not be the first place to draw analysis from.

4 Methodology

4.1 Methods of research

According to Clough and Nutbrown (2007, 34): “It is the task of methodology to uncover and justify research assumptions as far and as practicably as possible and to locate the claims which the research makes”. Saunders and co (2009, 3) describe methodology as “the theory of how research should be undertaken”.

4.2 Quantitative data

Quantitative data refers to numerical data or to data that can be quantified. (Saunders and co 2009, 414). Quantitative data can be presented as simple counts such as the frequency of occurrences or more complex data such as test scores. Quantitative data is divided into two groups: categorical and numerical. Categorical data is data that cannot be presented in numbers and has to be classified into categories. Numerical data is data that can be measured or counted numerically as quantities. (Saunders and co 2009, 414)

4.3 Qualitative data

“Qualitative data refers to all non-numeric data that have not been quantified and can be a product of all research strategies” as mentioned by Saunders and co (2009, 480). It can range from a short list of responses to open-ended questions. For the data to be useful it needs to be analyzed and the meanings understood. “Qualitative methods are flexible and unstructured. They employ a limited number of observations. Although the number of observations is low, several aspects of the problem area can be analyzed. Qualitative methods are more suitable when the objectives of the study demand in-depth insight into a phenomenon” as mentioned by Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002, 88)

“The main difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that qualitative methods are used when the research problems focus on uncovering a person’s experience or behavior. When an event or social process is difficult to study with quantitative methods, qualitative methods are more suitable because they can provide specific details and understanding” as mentioned by Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002, 87)

4.4 Mixed methods approach

When an author uses both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods it is called the mixed methods approach. (Saunders and co 2009, 152). Even though mixed methods research uses both qualitative and quantitative data it does not combine them. Quantitative data are analyzed quantitatively and qualitative data are analyzed qualitatively. (Saunders etc 2009, 152)

The advantages of using mixed method for this were that the author was able to analyze the data properly. Due to the vast scope of the research questions, it became too difficult to find answers just by analyzing numerical data. The author needed both approaches, because it was essential to get the viewpoints of both parties (players, coaches) involved in creating this service. The disadvantages were that there were a lot of data to be analyzed and that the scope might be too wide to identify the right areas of improvement. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, 33): "An advantage of using the mixed methods research is that it offers better inferences and it provides the opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent views".

4.5 Surveys and interviews

The interviews of Turku YMCA coaches and head of coaching and executive director were done by using the qualitative approach and see questions in Appendix 1. The additional questions were only for the coaches, and the Pekka Lähde and Kalevi Tuominen were asked the questions that concentrated on loyalty, recruitment and developmental ideas. Because there were fewer coaches and their qualities to provide more in-depth answers, it was easier to analyze their answer and find out the important findings. The interviewed coaches in alphabetical order are Leif Grönroos, Perttu Hytönen, Petka Lehtinen, Tapio Nieminen, Jari Nikander and Mika Pitkänen. They will be presented in random order as coach A, B, C, D, E, and F because of the promise of anonymity in the interviews.

The interview with Lahti YMCA head of coaching Petri Selkee was done by using the same questions as for the Turku YMCA personnel. The objective was to measure two organizations how to act with their youth team. The goal was to exclude monetary resources as central theme, but rather just to focus on the habits. By asking the same questions, the author was able to compare the answers from the two organizations, and clearly identify the differences and the problem areas for the Turku YMCA:

The survey for the players was handed out to them in person. 55 players returned the survey. In addition to these 55 survey results an additional 22 players were asked how they joined the organization. This particular question was found to be the most important one in the survey and this is why it was asked from the additional players. The author used quantitative approach here, because of the respondent's young age and inexperience in answering this kind of question and having no experience to identify the problem areas. The idea was to also find out how much do the players value basketball as a hobby, meaning is it their number one hobby. The most interesting question turned out to be the recruiting questions, because the players in Turku YMCA have joined in a variety of ways, the most marketed not being in the majority. It was also asked if the players would recommend Turku YMCA to their friends. Because there were a lot of players who answered the survey, the approach needed to be quantitative, so the data could be analyzed and categorized effectively.

By the mixed methods approach the author was able to gather valuable information from all the personnel. Instead of getting the averages on how the personnel feels about the organization the goal was to find out the actual reasons behind the grade, thus an important part of this thesis was to conduct an in-house survey with the coaches and players of Turku YMCA. By interviewing the coaches the author was also able to identify the issues that they are dissatisfied with. By interviewing the players the author was able to find how they feel about the organization's appreciation level towards them. Although they are young children and teenagers their opinions are still valuable to location the areas of improvement for the organization. They can also describe the conditions (coaching, facilities, events) of their current hobby to, and compare it to a past experience with another sport. All of this research was done to help to gather valuable information for the organization to help them to organize their marketing tactics and strategies. By analyzing these findings they will be able to make an informed decision on what their focuses need to be for the future.

5 Findings

5.1 Turku YMCA

The following chapter will present the findings from the questionnaire (Appendix 1) that the Turku YMCA personnel answered. The purpose for this questionnaire was to find out the coaches opinions on tasks, responsibilities and the current state of the organization. The coaches will not be addressed with their real name. As previously mentioned in chapter 4.5 the personnel are going to be randomly addressed as coach A,B, C, D, E and F because they were promised anonymity.

Interview question 1: Who is in charge of player acquisition?

Head of coaching Pekka Lähde states in his interview that he is in charge of player recruitment, but according to interviews done with all the six coaches his responsibilities are not clear to everyone. According to the coaches, the problem is that Lähde has too many responsibilities. Coach B says: “The biggest problem in the organization is that it is unclear to us who is in charge of what. The unclear roles are sometimes used as excuses. Sometimes our questions are answered with phrases like “this does not belong to me”. The roles and responsibilities need to be decided and written down, so we can address to right person if we have questions”. Coach F says that “the organization should be in charge of the recruitment process, but currently our recruiting is done through the Vesseli program and the active coaches, who have the time and energy to go to school and talk and promote the sport.

Interview question 2: How does Turku YMCA attempt to acquire new players?

All six coaches feel that it is important for Turku YMCA to create a clear strategy on how to attract new personnel. Coach D says that “In order for us to get the children to commit to basketball and Turku YMCA, we have to provide them with a clear overview of what kind of service we are offering. There are a growing number of smaller sports competing for our players so we have to determine our own strategy and way of doing things and then make sure to carry it out in everyday actions”. The coaches also stress that the organization has not identified their strongest recruitment tool. Coach B states that “the organization has to identify the best recruiting tool, and focus their resources on it. The number of players who have joined Turku YMCA through the afternoon clubs

and school visits is very small, so the organization should make the Vesseli program a priority”.

Besides the Vesseli program and afternoon clubs, Turku YMCA recruits players by doing school visits. Lähde says that “the school visits are very important to the organization. I did not realize how important they were in my first season as the head of coaching (2009-10), but since then the organization has increased the number of school visits and made them a point of emphasis. The visits are done by Lähde and one of the senior team players. Coach B says that “it is difficult for the children to identify with the person who make, because the senior team is only playing in the regional second division and they do not get a lot of publicity. The Senior team players are not known well enough among our potential players”.

According to Lähde, Vesseli program is targeted for children in elementary school. The objective is to get them familiarized with the sport through games. The goal is to get them to select basketball as their first hobby and to make it easy to join Turku YMCA, because they are already familiar with its personnel. The Vesseli Program is organized by one of the Turku YMCA coaches Leif Grönroos.

Interview question 3: How are new coaches acquired?

According to Lähde, there is no clear process for recruiting new coaches. “When I started as the head of coaching in August of 2009, the coaches were already selected for the 2009-10 season. For the following season the coaching staff stayed mainly the same, so the whole recruitment process is relatively new for me.”

Coach D says, “That the organization lacks a clear process for the recruitment of the coaches. It is too much depended on the chance that someone knows someone who is moving to Turku. Coaching recruitment has been neglected in recent years, and it has caused the fact that we have a lot of very experienced coaches who have been with us for a long time, and very young ones who are just figuring out their own coaching methods.

Interview question 4: What can be done to improve loyalty/retention and loyalty?

Based on all the interviews done for this thesis it was clear that the Turku YMCA personnel are very committed and loyal towards the organization. The six interviewees had been with the organization for an average of 13 years. All six state, that even

though they are currently satisfied with Turku YMCA, the organization needs to determine what is that they want to develop in the future.

Executive director Kalevi Tuominen states that Turku YMCA focuses on retention and loyalty, but it is difficult, because the organizations men's team is playing only in the regional second division. This means that the older junior players will have to consider defecting, because Turku YMCA cannot offer them a successful team on the senior level. Both coach B and C said that they have considered leaving the organization. Coach B says "all the coaches are amateurs and we have other occupations. There are not many alternatives for a basketball coach to choose from here in Turku. At the moment Turku YMCA satisfies my coaching needs". Coach C is concerned about the direction of the organization. He states that Turku YMCA "has no clear goals and objectives, and that send a negative message to the coaches that organization is not ambitious".

Interview question 5: How can coaching conditions be improved? / How much cooperation is there among the coaches in this organization?

Coaches C and F state that they are not appreciated enough by the organization. This is because they feel that Turku YMCA takes them for granted sometimes. The problem occurs when, for example, one of the coaches has been a part of summer camp for ten years, and then organization automatically signs them up for the eleventh straight year without even asking. Coach D feels, that because there is a clear generational gap in the coaching staff, cooperation between coaches is not easy. "The more experienced coaches have different approach to practicing and playing than the newer coaches, and the gap is increased by the fact that all the youth teams practice around the city and the coaches rarely get to speak to each other.

Coach A says that "the lack of resources (training equipment or gym time) sometimes causes the coaches to alter their practices, but the blame does not fall solely on the organization. The coaches also need more vocal and use the existing resources at better capacity". Coach E feels, that the coaching staff is not used to its full potential and that the organization should organize events, where the coaches could learn from each other.

Interview question 6: Are coaches offered enough opportunities to educate themselves?

According to Lähde the coaches in the organization are offered internal education and the possibility to take part in the courses offered by the Finnish Basketball Association. Coach C feels that the organization does not offer enough internal educational and that it is too much based on the ambition of the coach to find out information about different basketball coaches courses that are offered. Coach A states that “It is difficult to get the organization approve to compensate your attendance if there is a coaching clinic, for example, in Lithuania. It is always a struggle about how much the organization is willing to compensate for the travel and other expenses. This sends a message to the coaching staff, that the organization does not want us to educate ourselves”.

Interview question 7: Communication between coaches and head of coaching?

According to all six interviewed coaches, there is no friction among the personnel. Coach E feels “that Lähde has remained a bit a distant to all the coaches because he has too many responsibilities. The communication between the coaches and the head of coaching is based too much on exchanging e-mails”. Coach F says that the level of communication often depends a lot on the coach as well. “Lähde has clearly states that he is willing to discuss and advice the coaches on basketball related matters whenever they feel like they need assistance. The more experienced coaches are used to doing things their way, and do not know how to take advantage of this opportunity. The younger coaches also need to more active, and if they have any questions about the game discuss them with Lähde”.

Interview question 8: Are coaches awarded for their loyalty?

Pekka Lähde states that the organization does not award its personnel based on loyalty. “The organization has an awards ceremony at the end of the season, but each team can give awards to three players. The organization then awards the coach of the year, the youth player of the year, the team leader of the year and an award also goes to a person who has helped the organization the most during the year”. Coach A states that he sometimes feels taken granted by organization. “If, for example, a coach has spent 10 years with the organization, they should be rewarded. The reward does not have to be anything substantial, but it would be enough if the organization recognized your work and commitment is enough. Executive director Kalevi Tuominen says, that awarding loyalty is something that the organization will look to add the future years.

Interview question 9: How can this organization make itself more well-known?

All six coaches stated, the best way to make the organization more well-known, would be to get the senior team to the first division. Coach E says that without a successful senior Turku YMCA is not able to keep our top junior players after they are ready to play at the senior team level. "We need senior team that brings us more positive publicity, and that our youth players want to follow and idolize". Coach A believes that the organization needs to hire recruit more coaches to strengthen the coaching staff. "That would enable us to maintain a larger volume of players, and send out a positive message that Turku YMCA is growing basketball organization. Coach C feels that there needs to be honest discussion among the personnel about what the organization wants to be in future.

Interview question 10: How to allocate resources more efficiently?

Coach B and C there need to be more focus on the Vesseli program. Coach C says that the Vesseli program is currently the best recruiting tool for the organization and Turku YMCA have to allocate more resources towards it. "The reality is that Turku YMCA has to get the young children involved at an early age, so that there is no fear of competition from other sports". Coach E and F would like to see the organization apply for the Seal that is awarded the well-functioning youth organization (Sinettiseura in Finnish). "If the organization would be approved to be a Seal organization, it would send out a positive message to players, their parents and potential coaching candidates. The recognition would also hold the organization accountable, because then we would have to focus on monitor our operations and make sure that we are excelling in all areas".

Interview question 11: Would you recommend Turku YMCA to junior players and coaches?

All six coaches stated that they would recommend the organization to new players and coaches. Coach A said, that "even though the organization has its difficulties, Turku YMCA still is the best basketball organization in the Turku. We have to work hard in future to keep it that way and so that we will be able to sustain the level of coaching that we currently have". Coach B states that "Turku YMCA is good organization for coaches. The organization allows you the freedom to coach according to your own philosophy, but a coach has to prepare to do a lot of work on their own, because there is not a lot of cooperation between the personnel".

Interview question 14: Are you able to coach at full capacity? / What are coaching challenges that you face?

Coach B feels that he is able to coach at full capacity, but the situation is different because all coaches are amateurs. "Coaching at full capacity would require me to do this professionally, but on an amateur level I am satisfied with the capacity I am working at. Of course, there could be more training equipment and better gym times, but that does not affect my coaching. The reality is that in Finland it is difficult to go into organization and have everything you require, because basketball is a small sport in Finland".

The personnel of Turku YMCA feel that communication is one area where this organization is not working at its full capacity. The coaches are spread around the different schools in Turku and thus there is no communality. The little cooperation between the personnel is difficult things to improve, because the organization does not have any professional coaches, so their time commitment is always limited. This puts a lot of pressure on communication inside the organization, because the main discussion tool is via email. Because the coaches lack a proper forum for where to converse, they feel that they are left too alone and have to carry a lot of the work load by themselves. It is difficult to build loyalty if the teams are acting as their own units, thus meaning that Turku YMCA is currently more of host to several individual entities than actual community of people sharing the same values and working towards the same goal.

Coach E says that the fact the organization does not have a clear home court is a problem. "We can have practices in schools that are ten kilometers apart. We rarely practice at the same place with our other youth teams. If the practices were more concentrated in the downtown area, for example, we could store a lot of the coaches own training equipment for our youth teams to use".

Interview question 15: Does the organization satisfy their coaching needs?

Four of the six coaches stated the organization does satisfy their needs. Two of the coaches said yes, but with conditions. Coach A feels that at the moment he is content with the situation, but if he wanted to coach professionally, then he would probably have to leave the organization. Coach F stated that at the moment Turku YMCA satisfies his coaching needs, but he is unsure what will happen in future, if the organization is not able to improve in the following years.

Overall satisfaction rating for the organization

The coaches were asked to rate the organization with a scale of 1-5 (1 very dissatisfied, 5 very satisfied). The answers gave a clear answer that coaches are not satisfied with the organization. The average rating for Turku YMCA was 2,33. Even though the rating clearly indicated that the coaches are not satisfied, all of them stated that they committed and loyal toward Turku YMCA.

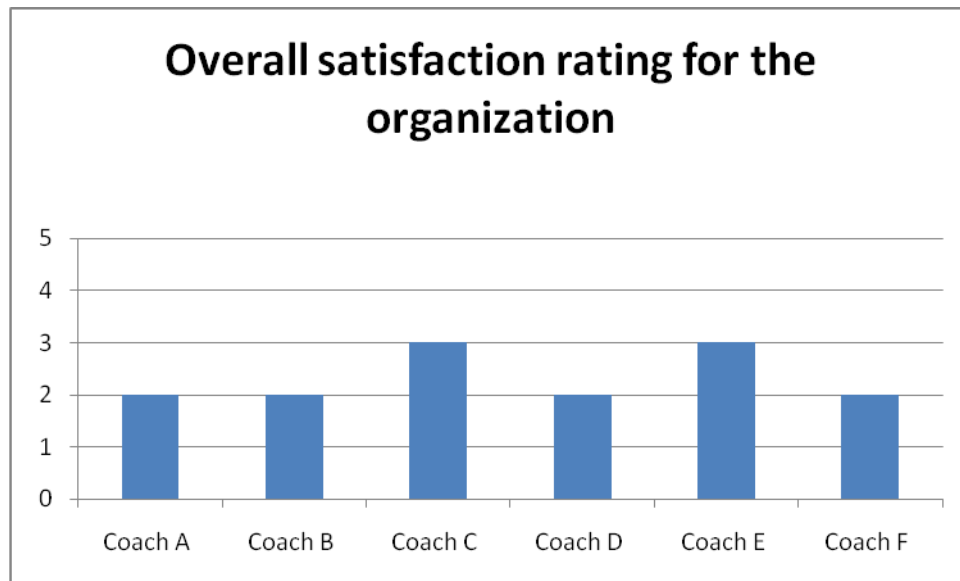


Table 1. Results for the Turku YMCA personnel interview.

5.2 Lahti YMCA

The Lahti YMCA was selected as benchmark, because they have succeeded in bringing a lot of Lahti-born players into the senior team. In the 2010-11 seasons Lahti YMCA had 12 players who have gone through their youth system in their lineup. This was the highest number of hometown players in the Finnish League. The focus of the interview was on how Lahti YMCA builds loyalty, does their recruitment and how they are succeeding in being able to retain their players and provide them with opportunities to make it to the senior level. This information was gathered from an interview with the Lahti YMCA head of coaching Petri Sleek by using the questionnaire in Appendix 1, except for the last questions which were only aimed at the coaching staff of the Turku YMCA. The objective was to find out the reasons what makes the two organizations different, how Lahti is able to bring up a lot of their own players into the senior team and how important is loyalty to them. The questionnaire that was asked of Selkee was

based on the research questions. His answered on the questionnaire will be presented first, followed by a comparison to the Turku YMCA interview findings.

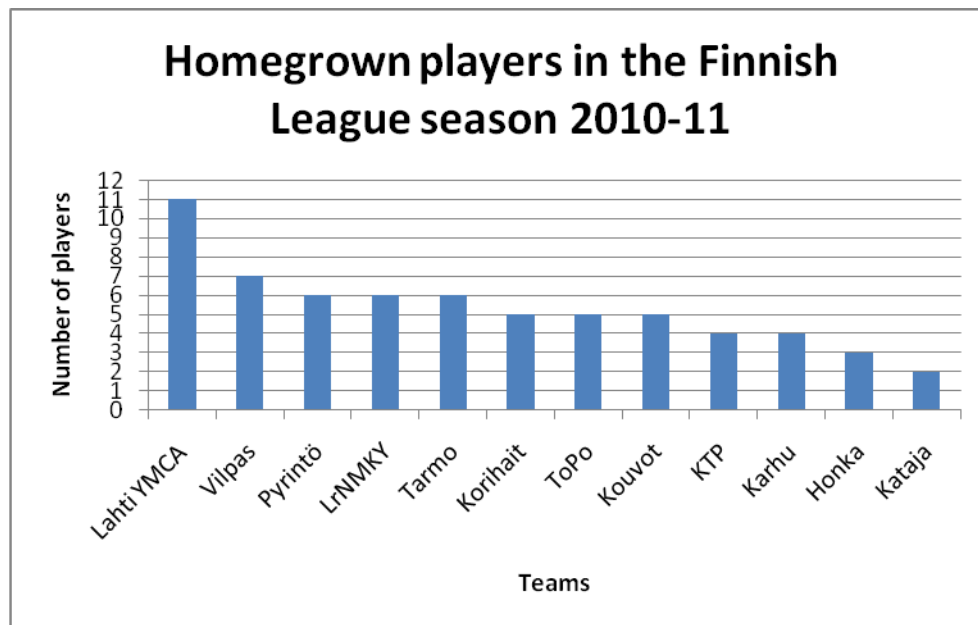


Table 2. Homegrown players in the Finnish League season 2010-11 (Finnish Basketball Association 2011)

According to Selkee, Lahti YMCA has four full-time employees executive director Hannu Ala-Sankola, Head of coaching Petri Selkee, Tuomo Keskiväli, who is in charge of their Elementary league. The Lahti YMCA junior players first play in the Elementary league which is for junior players who 10 years and younger and after that they join the U12 team. Lahti YMCA also employs Arttu Mannelin who is mainly a coach, but also does marketing activities.

Petri Selkee states in the interview, that he is in charge of recruiting players together with Tuomo Keskiväli. Selkee's main task is educating and advising coaches and he is also in charge of overseeing the C-, B- and A-juniors and their activities. Lahti YMCA has another person who is in charge of their Elementary League, so this reduces the workload of Selkee and Keskiväli and allows them to focus more on recruiting players and educating the coaches. Selkee is also in charge of planning the school visits. The organization does annually visit all of the 19 school all which are involved with their Elementary League. Lahti YMCA has a men's team in the top league and they bring several of their players along for these visits. The players are more known among

children and teenagers. This creates a clear marketing advantage for Lahti YMCA. As a recruiting tool, Lahti YMCA gives new players special starting package. They get to participate in three practices and one Elementary League tournament for free. Lahti YMCA has gotten a couple of local companies to sponsor this part of the recruiting process. All the new players get a basketball and basketball jersey to keep. The costs are low and impact is significant, because the children already feel like they are a part of something. This is equally beneficial for the local companies, because they get a lot of contacts and visibility. Lahti has a clear recruiting process and the effects are visible (Table 2).

When comparing the two organizations in terms of recruiting there are several differences. First, Pekka Lähde is the only person in charge of player and coach recruitment for Turku YMCA. According to the interviews with all the six coaches, they all feel that the recruiting tasks and responsibilities are unclear to the personnel. Coach A states: "I do not know who is in charge of player recruitment, because it has not been written down anywhere". Coach B adds: "At the moment the coaches are in charge of player's recruitment. Pekka Lähde does a few sample classes in elementary schools, but not enough to actually call it a recruiting process". Coach C says that "the recruitment process starts at practices. If we do a good job there the children will talk positive things about our organization to their friends. Positive word of mouth is extremely important for our organization".

According to Selkee Lahti YMCA focuses their marketing efforts firstly on the player. They want to make sure that they have selected as the proper venues for where to market and have the right message to send to the children. For example, a few years ago, after Lahti YMCA won the gold medal in the Finnish League, they started using the slogan "Lahti YMCA makes champions", which was very appealing to the children. Secondly, they market the sport also to the player's parents. They have selected their message clearly and they emphasize security, the quality of coaching and the social benefits of team sports.

Turku YMCA lacks a clear recruitment process. According to coach D "The organization has two full-time employees, so we should have enough resources to recruit player by doing school visits and attending sport gatherings where Turku YMCA and basketball should be on bigger display". Coach F states that "the organization should make a clear recruiting process, because currently there is only one person in

charge of it. This person has organized everything involving the Vesseli program himself and recruited approximately 100 players to Turku YMCA”.

When Lahti YMCA recruits a new coach, if he or she is not experienced, they are able to place in team which best suits his or her situation. With the assistance of Petri Selkee they will form a career path for the new coaches. The organization wants their coaches to gather as much experience in coaching before being too much responsibility.

Pekka Lähde says that he has been working as the head of coaching for two year, so he is still getting to know the people and making new contacts. He says that there is no clear process on how recruit coaches at the moment. Coach B states that “the organization does have contact with important basketball-minded people in Turku. For example, our head of coaching has not created the proper contacts to be able to recruit new coaches”. Coach D adds that he has never seen an advertisement on the internet or in the newspaper that Turku YMCA is looking for new youth team coaches.

Selkee states, that player retention and loyalty are important values for the organization. Their stance is that a homegrown player is a valuable marketing tool, but also it is also cost-effective. When Lahti YMCA acquires a new player who is not from Lahti in addition to the salary, the organization also has to pay for additional expenses that are caused from apartment rent and car expenses.

According to all the six Turku YMCA coaches, it is difficult for the organization to focus on player loyalty, because the organization cannot offer the older junior player a good level senior team to play for. Coach F says “The situation of the senior team is difficult. The organization had a hard time in acquiring a head coach for the team. The top A-junior players will gone in a few years if the organization is not able to correct the senior team’s course” Coach A adds: “We have good level coaching in the youth, and not many players defect from us. If the organization would be support the senior team so that they could play competitively in the first division, we would not have a problem with player retention”.

Selkee states, that Lahti YMCA makes their strategies according to 20, 30 year window. They do not want to focus on projects, but instead they preach longevity. They have created a clear path to show to players that in Lahti YMCA you can rise through the youngest junior teams and eventually make the senior team. Selkee adds that because of their emphasis on youth teams, they have been able to maintain a large

number of junior players in the organization. “The longer they stay with the organization the more likely it that they will bring their children to play for us”, Selkee says.

According to Executive director Kalevi Tuominen it is difficult for the organization to make long-term plan, because there a lot issues that need to be solved in the present. “We have had a lot of plans regarding about loyalty and creating communality. It is difficult, because there are too few people in charge of too many things. The organization needs new personnel to bring in new ideas and approaches. ”, Tuominen says.

The way the organizations educate their coaches is also different. In Lahti YMCA there is no training provided by the organization, because they want to encourage their personnel to other form education, offered by The Finnish Basketball Association. This is because they want their coaches to find out and educate themselves on issues that interested them, instead of organizing a mandatory event with a pre-arranged theme. Lahti YMCA men´s team and their junior teams share the same playing arena, so the coaches meet and converse daily. This helps Lahti YMCA to build communality and familiarity and helps to build a strong Lahti YMCA-spirit.

Turku YMCA offers coaching education inside the organization, but the participation to the events has been very low. Coach C says: “There are not enough of educational events inside the organization. There has been some good discussion in the few events organized this season. Sadly, the attendance in these events has not been at a good level, because they were put together on tight schedule and the coaches were not informed ahead of time”. Coach A states: “The organization needs to encourage the coaches to educate themselves. Currently, it is too much on the coach to find out information about educational opportunities themselves”.

Selkee says that Lahti focuses on building coaching teams to complement each other. They plan a career path for every coach, and make sure that they do not rush them into too difficult situations. The mentoring package that the organization provides for new coaches is not stack of papers, but coaching clinic with the other coaches in the organizations and also Selkee evaluates and discusses with the newcomers on a regular basis.

Turku YMCA does not offer a mentoring package to its new coaches, but there is a chance to converse with the head of coaching Pekka Lähde. Lähde says “that the difference is that in such a small organization like Turku YMCA the head of coaching

cannot only focus on educating the coaches. There are a lot of small fires for me to put out and takes a lot of me time". Coach F states that "a clear mentoring program is needed for new coaches so that they can learn the organizations values and habits more easily and feel like they are a part of a community. They should also be provided coaching clinic, we the new coaches would receive assistance from the more experienced coaches in the organization".

According to the interviews, Turku YMCA and Lahti YMCA have not measured the satisfaction of their personnel in recent years. Selkee believes that because they have many internal discussions, that the personnel has enough outlets to voice their opinion and give feedback about their coaching conditions. Lahti YMCA personnel also have a lot of activities and spend a lot their free time together, for example, by going to see the Finnish National Team play and travelling to Estonia every spring. All of the six coaches of Turku YMCA stated in the interview that measuring satisfaction would be important, but there are no plans to do it. "I think the organization should invite all feedback it gets from us, even if it is negative. There needs to be a proper discussion about the direction is heading to".

Lahti YMCA also markets their organization towards the player's parents, by offering them free tickets to see the men's team play in the exhibition season. Selkee says, that their goal is to get the parents invested and involved and hope that they develop a bond with the organization. If their children decide to stop playing basketball, the parents can remain with the organization and be valuable volunteers.

Coach B says: "The teams act as their own units, and are the organization is not very visible to us. The coaches do not have a lot of cooperation with each other and there can be even be coaches inside the organization who never talked to. The parents help out in acting as team leaders, organizing a lot of the small tasks involving practices, games and tournaments, but they have minimal contact with the actual organization".

According to Selkee, Lahti YMCA does not focus their marketing efforts on the internet or in using newspaper ads. Instead, they rely on the word of mouth marketing done by the personnel and the players. They use the internet more as a notification board. "Of course our website could be a lot better, but our focus is to do best possible job we can at practice courts to get the players to recommend our team to their friends. That is the best kind of marketing for us", Selkee says.

According to Kalevi Tuominen, there are plans to improve the organization website. The executive board has granted some monetary resources for it. "Improving the website is difficult, because it belongs to whole Turku YMCA voluntary association, not just Turku YMCA basketball". Coach A says, that "the Turku YMCA website is currently too complex. The user cannot find our organization goals and objectives, the most important part in my opinion. It would be important thing also for recruiting coaches, who could easily identify with the organization they are considering joining".

According to Selkee Lahti YMCA organizes their personnel differently. In Lahti YMCA the younger the team is, the more coaches they have. In Turku YMCA it is the opposite. Lahti YMCA does this because they want to maximize all the potential that their players have and it is too late for a player to start receiving quality individual training as a C-junior. There is also a difference when you go up the junior team ranks; Lahti YMCA has 3 team in A and B-juniors, while Turku YMCA has 2 B and 1 A team. This is another thing that separates the organization. Lahti YMCA wants all of the players to be involved with the organization, so that they can grow up to be, for example, business man or executives with a never-ending affection for basketball.

5.3 Players

The following part will present analysis from the survey that the players of Turku YMCA answered (Appendix 2). The survey was returned by 55 players and it contained closed questions. As mentioned in chapter 4.5, due to the importance of the surveys first question "how did you join the organization" an additional 22 players, who did not return the survey, were asked to describe how they were recruited to Turku YMCA. Out of the 77 respondents 18 answered that they joined Turku YMCA, because a friend had recommended the sport and the organization. This a very common recruiting tool for such small sport, like basketball. The high rate of new players who joined the organization through recommendation signals that the Turku YMCA players are enjoying being a part of the organization.

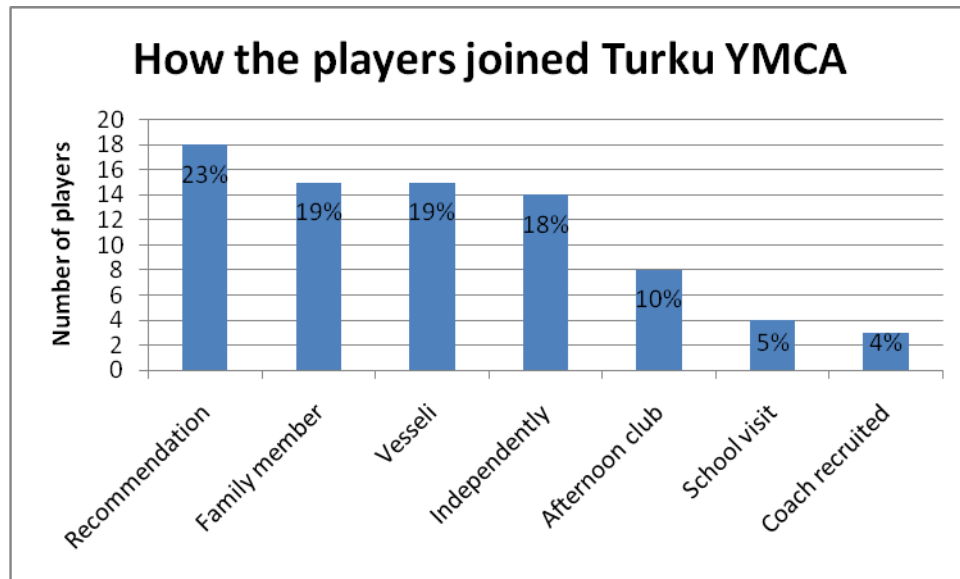


Table 3. How the players joined Turku YMCA.

15 of the respondents chose the alternative joined the organization because a family had introduced had played before and introduced them to the sport/organization. The survey revealed that the organization Vesseli program is their best recruiting tool next to recommendations. 15 current junior players in Turku YMCA have attended the Vesseli program and joined the organization as a result of it. This is an important finding, because Vesseli program is run only at one school (The Wäinö Aaltonen School in Hirvensalo) and it is run by one person, Leif Grönroos. Vesseli program is intended for preschoolers, children who have are looking for their hobby, and so if Turku YMCA is able to recruit one child to the Vesseli program-program, they have a clear advantage compared to other sports or hobbies because there is no competition. The Vesseli program has been a better recruitment tool for Turku YMCA than the afternoon clubs. The result may be caused by the fact that the clubs were targeted for the third and fourth grades (changed in 2010-11 to first graders), who may already have other hobbies and it is difficult for the organization to pry them away with so little contact to the sport. The afternoon clubs are held only once a week.

The recruitment question revealed the fact that 14 of the respondents have joined the organization after finding out about the sport and Turku YMCA by themselves. Basketball has a good reputation among the youth, and through YouTube and the social media it has become more accessible to everyone. This result proves that there are a lot of potential new players waiting to be recruited. The actual recruitment activities made by the organization have not attracted many players. The organization

has only gotten four junior players to joined Turku YMCA through school visits. This is either a signal that there is not enough school visits, or that the actual visits are not enticing enough. It is also a problem that, because Turku YMCA does not have a men's team in the two top Finnish Leagues, the sport and the organization and sport remain relatively unknown in the eyes of the children. This makes it a lot harder for the people planning and doing the visits to get a contact with the children. Three players were recruited by a coach. This recruitment means that a player was asked directly by a coach to join Turku YMCA.

For the question "do have any other hobbies besides basketball" 36 of the respondents stated that did not have any other hobbies. 19 of the respondents had other hobby's, including music, football, ice hockey and floorball. The follow-up to this question was "is basketball your number 1 hobby". The objective was to find out how committed they are to the organization. All but one of the respondents answered that basketball is their number 1 hobby. The fourth question in survey was "how satisfied are you with the level of coaching on the scale of 1-5 (1 very dissatisfied, 5 very satisfied)". Rating for coaching was very good. The clear majority (50) of the respondents gave the coaches a high mark (4 or 5) and five respondents gave them an average (3). This is a clear indication of the fact the youth players appreciate the coaching they are receiving.

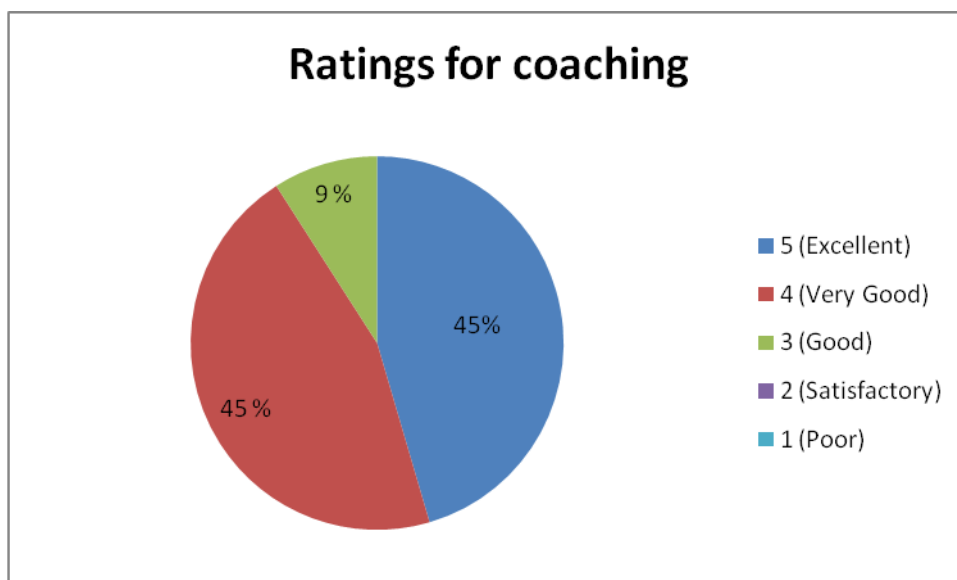


Chart 1. Ratings for coaching

The fifth question was “how satisfied are you with the organization on a scale of 1-5 (1 very dissatisfied, 5 very satisfied)”. Ratings for organization were lower than the grades for coaching. 35 respondents gave Turku YMCA a high mark (4, 5), but they also received 15 answers for average and three for poor (2). According to the findings presented in chapter 5, this is because the children are mostly in contact with their own team and have very little interaction with Turku YMCA.

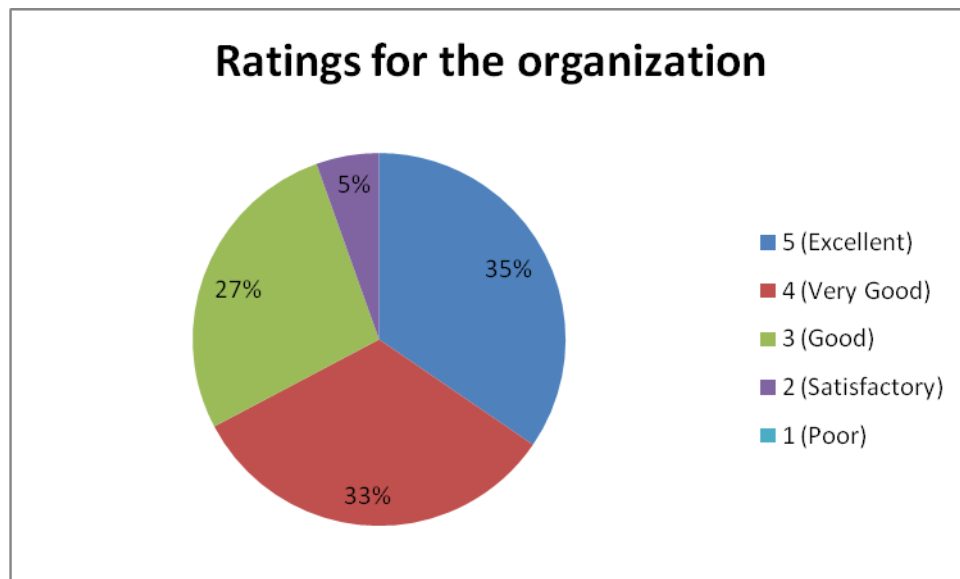


Chart 2. Ratings for the organization

The last question was “would you recommend Turku YMCA to your friends who are thinking about starting basketball” All 55 respondents answered yes, which gave a clear indication that the players are satisfied with the organization and how their particular team is functioning. This is an important finding, because the as chapter 5 revealed recommendation is at the moment the best recruitment tool for the organization.

6 Recommendations & Conclusions

These following conclusions and recommendation are based on the literature review, the theoretical framework, interviews done with personnel in the Turku YMCA, and also the personal experience that the author has of the organization in questions has also influenced the recommendations.

Research question 1: How to improve the organization with the existing resources?

For the organization to avoid further misunderstandings the tasks and responsibilities of recruitment should be sorted and made into a written guideline. Now the recruitment is done by whoever has contacts to elementary schools or by someone who has the time and energy to do it on their free time, for example teacher recruiting from their schools. The head of coaching should be in charge of the player recruitment process by deciding how what are the channels that are used for it.

It is difficult for Turku YMCA to attract top junior players to their organization. The level of play in the regional second division is not high enough to satisfy the player's needs when they are selecting their new team and also the level of media exposure decreases. The junior players will not go and see their own senior team play. This reduces communality and their loyalty towards the organization. Newspapers and different local media will not be interested in reporting about the success of Turku YMCA's youth teams. They want a top-level senior team, because they need to have something that the readers or people can connect with. A top-level senior team is needed to retain the highest junior talent in Turku YMCA. Also, the sponsors and supporters of the organization will reduce the support for Turku YMCA, because of the low level of visibility.

It is recommended that Turku YMCA develops a clear communication strategy. They have to decide what they want to communicate and to whom. The way the organization communicates now is too much on the individual who writes it, meaning that because there are several different people writing, for example, a statement to parents, the message sent out represents the ideas and values of that particular person, not the whole organization. The main source of information, the Turku YMCA website, is

mainly a notification board and lacks substance. The organization website is also an area which should be improved, mainly because it contains old information and acts only as information board at the moment. The problem is that the website is run by the main association of the Turku YMCA, so the basketball side does not have the authority to change it. The website does not convey the objectives and goals of the organization, or what kind of basketball they are raising.

It would be beneficial to Turku YMCA, if they would identify the key selling points they want to communicate to the public about their organization. Their senior team has played in the regional second division for the last four seasons. This means that the public is unaware of the organization, because they are not getting the same amount of media exposure as five years ago. The image of Turku YMCA has gone downward significantly during that time, and basketball might not even be the first thing people think about the organization. If Turku YMCA focused on enhancing its image by using social media more and improving the content of their website, it could make their organization more visible and their values and objectives clearer.

Research question 2: What actions can be done to improve personnel satisfaction?

It is recommended that there should be a discussion forum for the personnel, because it is recommended that they are able to give and receive feedback about their work and compare experiences with the other coaches. Events, where the whole personnel are assembled could help to restore some of the lost communality and re-create the Turku YMCA-spirit. The problem is that most of personnel, excluding the executive director and head of coaching, have their own occupational, educational and family duties outside of the practices and games. Because of this, it is difficult to organize events for all the personnel, but it is still very important, because organizing such events send out message to the personnel and volunteers that the organization is looking to improve and is looking forward to the future instead of just making sure that make it through another year. The communication between personnel is mainly based on exchanging emails. This is the norm nowadays, but by relying too much on only this form of communication the organization will become distant even to its own personnel.

It is recommended that the organization writes a clear manual of the organizations activities and what kind of players we want to raise, because at the moment it is difficult to identify a Turku YMCA player. The junior teams of Turku YMCA do not have a clear

identity. A manual would allow the organization to analyze its activities on a yearly basis and find areas in which to improve. If the organization chooses to take the correct steps and the organization opens itself up yearly analyzing, they can apply to be noted as one top youth organization in Finland. The Nuori Suomi registered association awards organizations with the title Sinettiseura, which is a guarantee of quality youth organization. This could be a great marketing tool for the organization to present to parents who looking to enroll their children for their first hobby.

A rewarding system for loyalty would be a very beneficial addition. It is recommended that personnel who have been with organization for 10, 20 years to be acknowledged. The tendency is to take people who have been with the organization for so long for granted and to blindly trust their level commitment and loyalty. Even if there is not an actual threat of leaving, a coach can become dissatisfied and less motive if the organization does not recognize their hard work. Turku YMCA's rewarding are mostly based on success, for example, the coach of the year is the head of coach of the most successful team. This gives out a signal that rewarding is some kind of a race, and not an appreciation for a person for their hard work. The personnel interviews gave indications that most of the coaches feel that they are not appreciated enough by the organization and have not received enough thanks for their work. The coaches all stated that it would be important for them to receive some sort of reward for their daily work, not just for success. The reward does not have to be substantial, but in accordance with the achievements of the person that the organization is rewarding. By rewarding the personnel Turku YMCA helps to create a better atmosphere inside the organization, communality and it also makes the personnel feel more appreciated.

It is recommended that educating the coaching staff would become a priority for the organization. The coaches feel that they are told not encouraged to educate themselves. The obstacle seems to financial, but can solved with better communicating and making an educational plan for every coach, so these things can be anticipated better. The attendance in coaching education that is offered inside the organization has been relatively low, because there are so few events during the season. The problem here is that these events are organized very quickly and without proper planning. By scheduling these events ahead of time and with clear theme, the attendance will get better. The organization has cut down on these meetings because of the coaches' time restraints, but that just further the problem. The personnel need to get used to the fact that Turku YMCA is organizing these events, so that the coaches will be there. By

losing personnel from your organization, they not only lose valuable know-how but also send out a negative message to the public about your organization

Research Question 3: How to attract new people (coaches, players)?

It is recommended that Turku YMCA creates a recruitment strategy for coaches. This would enable the organization to be more active towards their players who are just finishing off their junior career, and former coaches, to get them involved in coaching. The problem is that, because there is no mentoring package, the people who are thinking about joining the organization have the image that coaching is a difficult task and it consumes a lot of their time. With better communication, i.e. mentoring package, or placing first year coaches with experienced ones, the transition from player to coach would be easier. The mentoring package should not only be a booklet handed out to a newcomer, but should also involve discussions and coaching events with the other personnel. If a new coach does not receive a mentoring package, it might take several years for him/her to find out how to function inside the organization and feel like they are a part of community. This will make retaining the personnel who are not familiar with organization difficult.

Due to the fact that the organization does not have many events for the personnel; the newcomers can think that they are alone, and not a part of a community. By organizing a discussion forum, or special practices where the experienced coaches can personally guide the new ones, could provide an important part in to the recruitment process.

In terms of the recruitment process Turku YMCA it is recommended that the organization develops a strategy for it. As the findings in this thesis indicates word of mouth (family and friends), the Vesseli program and people independently finding out about the organization are the most powerful recruitment tools for the organization. The Vesseli program is supported by Turku YMCA, but the actual work is done by one of the organizations coaches, Leif Grönroos. The amount of recruited children is mostly to his credit. These findings clearly state that there are improvements to be done, because players are joining the organization without any recruitment. Turku YMCA needs to decide on what time of recruitment they want allocate their resources to. By focusing their resources into one area, they will get a better result than when spreading it all around.

By increasing the amount of school visits, Turku YMCA can create visibility and awareness of the organization. The most important thing in recruiting is to make

contact with children, and give them a short tutorial about basketball, so that they can become interested in the sport. For these school visits it is recommended that Turku YMCA brings along someone who the children can easily identify with or know already. Even though the organization senior team is currently struggling, Turku YMCA has brought up several quality players, who have a good reputation and can create a new level of excitement for the school visits.

Besides the satisfactory measurements done in this thesis, it would be beneficial for the organization to conduct a second, more thorough questionnaire for the personnel. The organization needs to open itself up for criticism, because it is the only way to progress. At the moment most of the personnel do not have a venue to voice their opinions. The findings should be talked in a discussions forum, where all the members of the organization are welcomed. It is important for the organization to make the personnel feel like they are part of decision making process. This the way most organizations conduct, and if Turku YMCA wishes to develop it actions, there needs to be open discussion about the organization on a regular basis.

When comparing internal and external marketing, it is apparent that internal marketing is more valuable and efficient for the organization. As highlighted in chapter 5, recommendation is Turku YMCA's number one recruitment tool. Internal marketing leads to the players and coaches being satisfied with the organization. This means that the organization should direct more resources towards supporting internal marketing, because their current external marketing methods have not been very successful.

REFERENCES

- Arantola, H. 2003. Uskollinen asiakas- Kuluttaja-asiakkuuksien johtaminen. WSOY: Porvoo
- Armstrong, G., Kotler, P., Saunders. J. & Wong, V. Principles of Marketing. 2001. Prentice Hall: New York
- Baron, S. & Harris, K. 2003. Services Marketing, Texts and Cases. Palgrave:New York. 2nd edition
- Bateson, J.E.G & Hoffman, K.D. 2007. Services Marketing. Concepts, strategies and cases. Thomson South-Western: Delhi. India Edition
- Brady, M. & Goodman, M. & Hansen, T. & Keller, K.L. & Kotler, P. 2009. Marketing Management. Pearson Prentice Hall: London
- Clough, P. & Nutbrown, C. 2007. A student's guide to methodology. Sage publication: Los Angeles. 2nd edition
- Farris, P. W. & Bendle, N.T. & Pfeifer, P.E. & Reibstein, D. J. 2007. Marketing Metrics: 50 + Metrics Every Executive Should Master. Wharton University of Pennsylvania: Pearson Prentice Hall
- Fornell, C. 2007. The Satisfied Customer – Winners and losers in the battle for buyer preference. Palgrave Macmillan: New York
- Ghuri, P. & Gronhaug, K. 2002. Research Methods in Business Studies – A practical guide. Prentice Hall: New York 2nd edition
- Hargie, O. & Tourish, D. 2004. Key issues in organizational communication. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group
- Heskett, J.L., Jones, T.O., Loveman, G.W., Sasser, E. & Schlesinger, L.A. 2008. Putting the service profit chain to work. Harvard Business Review. July-August 2008. Harvard Business Publishing Corporation : Boston
- Jantsch, J. 2006. Duct Tape Marketing. The world's most practical small business marketing guide. Nashville: Nelson Business
- Pitts, B. & Stotlar, D. 2002. Fundamentals of Sport Marketing. 2nd edition. Morgantown: Fitness Information Technology, Inc.
- Robinson, S. & Etherington, L. 2006. Customer loyalty: A guide for time travelers. Palgrave Macmillan: New York
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill A. 2009. Research methods for business students. Prentice Hall: New York. 5th edition.
- Silverman, G. 2001. The secrets of word of mouth marketing. How to trigger exponential sales through runaway word of mouth marketing. New York: Amacom
- Teddlie, C. & Tashakkori, A. 2009. Foundations of Mixed Methods Research. Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social Behavioral Sciences. Sage: Los Angeles

Internet references:

Finnish Basketball Association 2011, www.basket.fi

Turku YMCA personnel interviews:

Grönroos, Leif. Turku YMCA U12 coach. Recorded interview. 75 minutes. 14.8.2010

Hytönen, Perttu. Turku YMCA senior team coach. Recorded interview 70 minutes. 5.8.2010

Lehtinen, Petka. Turku YMCA A-junior coach. Recorded interview. 55 minutes. 7.8.2010

Lähde, Pekka. Turku YMCA Head of coaching. Recorded interview. 50 minutes. 30.8.2010

Nieminen, Tapio. Turku YMCA C-junior coach. Recorded interview. 62 minutes. 2.9.2010

Nikander, Jari. Turku YMCA C-junior coach. Recorded interview. 46 minutes. 2.9.2010

Pitkänen, Mika. Turku YMCA U12 coach. Recorded interview. 65 minutes. 15.8.2010

Selkee, Petri. Lahti YMCA head of coaching. Recorded interview. 55 minutes. 30.8.2010

Tuominen, Kalevi. Executive director. Recorded interview. 45 minutes 4.9.2010.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Turku YMCA personnel

PLAYER/PERSONNEL ACQUISITION

Who is in charge of player acquisition?

- How does it work?
- Overlapping roles

How do you attempt to acquire new players/personnel?

- Is there a concrete process?
- Where /schools, internet, own website, newspaper
- When /when season starts, during the season?
- Own after school basketball camps?

How are new coaches acquired?

- Keep the search in-house?
- How are they welcomed to the organization?
- What is the process like?
- What are they promised?

ORGANIZATIONAL LOYALTY

What can be done to improve player retention/loyalty in the organization?

- Is there a plan; How does the organization focus on loyalty?
- Is loyalty awarded?

How can the coaching conditions be improved?

- Do they have enough resources to work with?
- Is satisfaction measured?

- Is there a certain problem that coaches face that requires help from the organization?
- What factors affect loyalty on your part?

Are coaches offered enough education possibilities to maintain/improve their coaching skill level? Communication between coaches and the head of coaching?

Are coaches awarded for their loyalty?

- Or achievements, for example medals

SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENT

How does/can the organization make itself more well-known?

What can the organization do to alleviate the heavy workload that the coaches have?

- Improve communication between organization and coach?
- Is there a chance centralize some actions to someone that is currently done by every team?

How to allocate the resources more efficiently?

- Focus on coaching conditions?
- Reduce overlapping by distributing responsibilities differently?
- Improve communication between coaches/ personnel/ organization

Anything else that comes to mind?

Coaches:

How long have you coached for Turku YMCA?

☐ 1-3 years

☐ 4-6 years

☐ 7 years or

longer

How satisfied are with your time with Turku YMCA (the whole organization)?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Displeased

Very displeased

If answer is 1,2

- ☐ or 5, why?

Would you recommend Turku YMCA to other coaches or to junior players?
YES/NO

Are you able to coach to full capacity?

- Do you have to make compromises?
- Does this organization support its coaches?
- Are you able to focus solely on coaching? (Distractions?)

How much cooperation is there among the coaches in the organization?

- Do coaches communicate with each other?
- Are there any certain values in the organization that you recognize?

Have you thought about joining another organization?

What are the challenges that coaches face?

- How to assemble your team
- how to get them to participate
- organizing practices
- allocating your resources

Does the organization satisfy your coaching needs?

- Keep their promises?

How to improve player/personnel retention?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the Turku YMCA players



Survey for players

How did you join Namika?

- ☐ School visit ☐ Recommendation ☐ Afternoon club
☐ Vesseli ☐ Family member

If you joined the organization in some other way, write brief description

Do have any other hobby's besides basketball?

- ☐ Ice Hockey ☐ Football ☐ Floorball
☐ Volleyball ☐ Other (e.g. music)
☐ No other hobbies

Is basketball your number one hobby?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

How satisfied are you with the level of coaching in Turku YMCA on the scale 1-5?

(5 very satisfied, 1 very dissatisfied)

1 2 3 4 5

How satisfied are you with the organization on a scale 1-5?

(5 very satisfied, 1 very dissatisfied)

1 2 3 4 5

Would recommend Turku YMCA to your friends who are thinking about starting to play basketball?

☐ Yes ☐ No